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WHOLE NUMBER 250

From the London Family Herald.

"NOT AT HOME."

Mrs. Granger, Mrs. Dr. West, and Mrs. Gray, all happened to meet at the residence of Mrs. Grand, one morning. They were fashionable women, and of course making fashionable calls.

Mrs. Grand's first impulse was to be "not at home," as she felt somewhat indisposed; but, on second thought, she contrived to infuse a little animation into her features, and crept down stairs. The ladies, however, were so cordial and so chatty, that Mrs. Grand did not regret having made the effort.

Conversation for once took an unexpected turn, and instead of wasting exclamations upon Mrs. Upham's extravagant bonnet, or Mrs. Smith's little flirt's new *maire antique*, the theme was, "Not at home."

Mrs. Granger declared she could see no harm in such a very little white lie, for in one sense people were not at home—to company! She found it a most convenient excuse for being, and if she had a headache, or wanted a day for herself, she did not scruple to use it.

"I shall remember that," said Mrs. Gray, laughing.

"Oh! to my intimate friends I am, of course, always at home," replied Mrs. Granger, blushing scarlet—"but now confess, you dear little piece of propriety, that you use this subterfuge occasionally. You certainly cannot always see your immense circle of visitors at home."

"I certainly cannot," said Mrs. Gray; "but I believe I never sent that message to the door but once, and for that once," she continued, a painful look crossing her face, "I shall never forgive myself. It was more than three years ago, and when I told my servant that morning to say, 'Not at home' to whomsoever might call, except she knew it was some intimate friend, I felt my cheeks tingle, and the girl's look of surprise mortified me exceedingly. But she went about her duties, and I about mine, sometimes pleased that I had adopted a convenient fashion by which I could secure more time to myself, sometimes painfully smitten with the reproaches of my conscience. Thus the day wore away, and when Mr. Gray came home, he startled me with the news that a very dear and intimate friend was dead."

"It cannot be," was my reply, "for I've exacted of me a solemn promise that I would, alone, sit by her dying pillow, as she would a secret of great importance to reveal to me. You must be misinformed; no one has been for me"—here suddenly a horrible suspicion crossed my mind. "She sent for you, but you were not at home," said Mr. Gray, innocently; then he continued, "I am sorry for Charles, her husband; he thinks her distress was much aggravated by your absence, from the fact that she called your name piteously. He would have sought for you, but your servant said she did not know where you were gone. I am sorry. You must have been out longer than usual, for Charles sent a servant over here three times."

"Never in all my life did I experience such loathing of myself, such utter humiliation. My servant had gone further than I, in adding falsehood to falsehood, and I had placed it out of my power to reprieve her by my own equivocation. I felt humbled to the very dust, and the next day I resolved, over the cold clay of my friend, that I would never again, under any circumstances, say, 'Not at home.'"

"But did you find out the secret?" asked Mrs. Granger.

"Never," said Mrs. Gray; "it died with her. It was in relation to a little child in the family, and I have always felt a painful consciousness that I might have received information by which the poor little thing could be greatly benefited."

Mrs. Granger untied her delicate bonnet strings, and took to fanning herself with a lace handkerchief. Mrs. Grand immediately rose and offered her a fan that lay on a little table near.

"That reminds me," said Mrs. Dr. West, "of a similar circumstance that occurred in my husband's practice. At one time we were very intimate with the family of a Mr. Allen. They lived in the suburbs in a beautiful mansion. The doctor called there quite often as a friend and acquaintance. Mrs. Allen had but one child, a son, some five years old; a little angel in appearance and disposition, and as complete an idol as ever shared the love of two devoted hearts. One day my husband rode by there, and as was his wont, stopped a moment. A new servant who did not know him, met him, and told him the mistress was not at home; so he rode off again. Some two hours after he came home, and was surprised when I told him that Mr. Allen had sent after him long ago; that Mrs. Allen was very crazy, and the child dying. He was fully swallowed by the news. There were several doctors called, but the little Eugene died. My husband ascertained that the child had been informed at the period of his visit, he could easily have saved his life. When Mrs. Allen learned that he actually stood before her door at the very moment she discovered that her child was ill, her reason forsook her, and she has never since fully recovered. She had given strict orders that morning that she was at home to no one; and, unfortunately, a physician could not be found till nearly an hour too late."

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Granger, petulant, "what can one do when one's visiting list is so large?" and she drew together the folds of a magnificent cashmere shawl. "One would not like to send down an excuse; for my part, I don't see how you could do so."

"I do very well without resorting to a falsehood," said Mrs. West.

"Oh, dear me! You can't call it a lie!" exclaimed Mrs. Granger, much mortified.

"Then, what is it?" asked Mrs. West.

The calm, quiet tone, quite confounded Mrs. Granger. She pulled at her glove uneasily. "Why, it is—why, certainly—not exactly a lie!" and then she hesitated.

"What else can you call it?" said Mrs. West. "Suppose I should tell a friend, who might happen to ask me, that I had not visited Mrs. Grand to-day?"

"Why, of course, it would be false," said Mrs. Granger, who was growing fidgety.

"Well, and where is the difference, if Mrs. Grand had sent word that she was not at home? Certainly we should have felt bound to believe the correctness of the message."

Mrs. Grand made a nice little mental promise that perhaps she never would do so again.

Be Courteous;

OR THE RAILROAD CONDUCTOR CAUGHT.

"You cannot judge of a man by the coat he wears."

"Hullo, Limpy, the cars will start in a minute; hurry up, or we shall leave you behind!"

The cars were waiting at a station of one of our Western railroads. The engine was puffing and blowing. The baggage master was busy with baggage and checks. The men were hurrying to and fro with chests and valises, packages and trunks. Men, women and children were rushing for the cars and hastily securing their seats, while the locomotive snorted, and pulled and flowed.

A man, carelessly dressed, was standing on the platform of the depot. He was looking around him, and seemingly paid little attention to what was passing. It was easy to see that he was lame. At a hasty glance one might easily have supposed that he was a man of neither wealth nor influence. The conductor of the train gave him a contemptuous look, and stepping him familiarly on the shoulder, called out:

"Hullo, Limpy, better get aboard, or the cars will leave you behind!"

"Time enough, I reckon," replied the individual so roughly addressed, and he retained his seemingly listless position.

The last trunk was tumbled into the baggage car. "All aboard!" cried the conductor.

"Get on, Limpy!" said he, as he passed the lame, carelessly dressed man.

The lame man made no reply.

Just as the train was slowly moving away, the lame man stepped on the platform of the last car, and walking in, quietly took a seat.

The train had moved on a few miles when the conductor appeared at the door of the car where our friend was sitting.

Passing along, he soon discovered the stranger whom he had seen at the station.

"Hand out your money here!"

"I don't pay," replied the lame man, very quietly.

"Don't pay?"

"No, sir."

"We'll see about that. I shall put you out at the next station!" and he seized the valise which was on the rack over the head of our friend.

"Better not be so rough, young man," returned the stranger.

The conductor released the carpet bag for a moment; and seeing he could do no more than, he passed on to collect the fare from other passengers. As he stopped at a seat a few paces off, a gentleman who had heard the conversation just mentioned, looked up at the conductor, and asked him:

"Do you know to whom you were speaking just now?"

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Advantage of Trees.

"How beautiful, most beautiful of earth's ornaments are trees!"

Waving out on the hills and down in the valleys, in wildwood or orchard, or singly by the wayside. God's spirit and benison seem to us ever present in trees. For their shade and shelter to man and brute; for the music the wind make among their leaves, and the birds in their branches; for the fruits and flowers they bear to delight the palate and the eye, and the fragrance that goes out and upward from them forever—we are worshipful of trees.

"Under his own vine and fig tree"—what more expressive of rest, independence and lordship in the earth! Well may the Arab reverence in the date-palm: a God-given source of sustenance. Dear to the Spaniards is the olive, and to the Hindoos his banyan, wherein dwell the families of man, and the birds of heaven build their nests. Without trees, what a desert place would be our earth—naked, parched and hateful to the eye! Yet how many are thoughtless of the use and beauty of trees. How many strike the axe idly and wantonly at their roots. Above all other things in the landscape we would deal gently with trees. Most beautiful where and as God plants them, beautiful even as planted by the poorest art of man, trees should be protected and preserved.

"If he is a benefactor who causes two blades of grass to grow where one grew before, how much greater his beneficence who plants a tree in some waste place, to shelter and shade, to draw thither song-birds, and to bear fruit for man. Plant trees, O man, that hast waste land, and be careful of those that are planted!"

We do not (says the Christian Advocate) know the author of the above beautiful and comprehensive notice of trees; but we think it peculiarly well adapted to our readers of involuntarily and heartily responsive to the familiar and popular language of the song of

WOODMAN, SPARE THAT TREE.

BY GEORGE F. GEORGE MORRIS.

Woodman, spare that tree!

Touch not a single bough,

In youth it sheltered me,

And I'll protect it now.

'Twas my father's hand

That placed it near his cot;

There, woodman, let it stand;

Thy axe shall harm it not!

That old familiar tree,

Whose glory and renown

Are spread o'er land and sea—

And wouldst thou how it down!

Woodman, forbear thy stroke!

Cut not its earth-bound ties;

Oh, spare that aged oak,

Now towering to the skies.

When but an idle boy

I sought its grateful shade;

In all their gushing joy,

Here, too, my sisters played:

My mother kissed me here,

My father pressed my hand;

Forgive this foolish tear—

But let that old oak stand.

My heart-strings 'round thee cling,

Close as thy bark, old friend!

Here shall the wild bird sing,

And still thy branches bend.

Old tree! the storm still brave!

And, woodman, leave the spot,

While I've a hand to save,

Thy axe shall harm it not.

GREENEY BACKING DOWN.—Greeney is evidently frightened in view of the probable consequences in the South, in reference to the next Congress, from the late Abolition harangues of W. H. Seward. Accordingly, we are told, in substance, by our cautious philosopher of the old white hat and leather breeches, that Seward is not half so black as he has been painted; that his Rochester speech is very materially softened down by his subsequent speech at Rome, and that from both speeches it is apparent that the anti-slavery policy of Mr. Seward is as harmless as genuine Orange county milk, fresh from the cow. Unfortunately, however, that Rochester manifesto is upon record, as approved and published from the hands of the orator himself, and the record will thus stand against him. We admit that the speech was intended partly to cut under the Abolition platform of Gerrit Smith; but the prime object in view was an anti-slavery bid for the Presidency, which would cast Governor Banks, Governor Chase, Senator Hale, and all other Republican aspirants in the shade. In this light, if the opposition to the Democracy in the South can, in co-operation with their Northern Republican allies, elect a single member to Congress from any Southern State, the result will be a victory worth recording.

NEW YORK HERALD.

A SINGULAR PHENOMENON.—In the recent address of Hon. T. L. Chittenden, before the North Carolina State Fair, he alluded to the connection with the manufacturing of wine, and the difficulty on the Atlantic slope of the United States, in preventing its ascension from the States, a remark which fact concerning a locality of the Western part of the State. In a district of many miles in extent on the Tryon mountains, neither deer nor forest is ever known. The same district is remarkable for the variety and excellence of its native grapes, and they are often found in fine condition in the open air, as late as December. That some of the vineyards in this locality are planted with the same variety of grapes as are found in the West, and we should like to know more concerning it.

A Model Merchant.

"I dined yesterday with—, who may well be called a model merchant; not because business seems the business of his life, but precisely because it is not so. He makes business subservient to him; he is never the slave of business. I was asking him after dinner about the colonial